

Message Text

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13
ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
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TAGS: PFOR, GE, GW, UR
SUBJECT: GDR CONTINUES TO RELY ON SOVIET MEDIA COMMENTARIES IN THE
STERNFAHRT AFFAIR

REF: BERLIN 6552

1. THE GDR CONTINUES TO REFRAIN FROM ISSUING ITS OWN PRESS
COMMENTARIES ON THE CONTINUING AUGUST 13 STERNFAHRT TRANSIT
CONTROVERSY. SED PARTY ORGAN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND (ND) ONCE
AGAIN RELIED ON SOVIET MEDIA COMMENTARIES FROM RADIO MOSCOW
AND "PEACE AND PROGRESS" ON AUGUST 27 TO DISPLAY SOVIET
SUPPORT FOR THE GDR'S DENIAL OF THE TRANSIT ROUTE TO JUNGE
UNION STERNFAHRT PARTICIPANTS ON AUGUST 13. IN ADDITION TO
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THE SOVIET COMMENTARIES, THE AUGUST 27 ND ALSO CARRIED

COMMENTARIES FROM THE INDIAN WEEKLY "LINK" AND THE LISBON-BASE PAPER "O DIARIO" SUPPORTING THE GDR POSITION.

2. BOTH THE RADIO MOSCOW AND PEACE AND PROGRESS COMMENTARIES ATTACK "ENEMIES OF DETENTE IN THE FRG" FOR PRESENTING A DISTORTED PICTURE OF SOVIET AND GDR POLICIES. THEY RESTATE EARLIER ARGUMENTS THAT THE GDR ACTED IN AGREEMENT WITH THE QA IN TURNING BACK THE STERNFAHRT BUSES. ACCORDING TO THE PEACE AND PROGRESS COMMENTARY, THE STERNFAHRT PARTICIPANTS HAD BEEN TURNED BACK BECAUSE THEY INTENDED TO MISUSE TRANSIT TO WEST BERLIN FOR GOALS INCOMPATIBLE WITH "THE MAINTENANCE OF CALM IN THE AREA" AND "THE AVOIDANCE OF UNNECESSARY COMPLICATIONS AND FRICTIONS." THE COMMENTARY REITERATES THAT THE REGULATION OF CIVIL TRANSIT TRAFFIC IS THE PREROGATIVE OF THE GDR UNDER EXISTING AGREEMENTS AND THAT TRANSIT TRAFFIC RUSH THROUGH THE SOVEREIGN TERRITORY OF THE GDR.

3. THE COMMENTARY FURTHER STATES THAT THE STERNFAHRT PARTICIPANTS GOT WHAT THEY DESERVED SINCE MERELY THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THEY PLANNED TO USE THE TRANSIT ROUTES TO ATTEND THE AUGUST 13 DEMONSTRATION AMOUNTED TO A PROVOCATION AGAINST THE GDR.

4. IN TAKING TO TASK THOSE WHO WOULD QUESTION OSTPOLITIK AS A RESULT OF THE STERNFAHRT INCIDENT, RADIO MOSCOW REMINDS THAT THE QA ITSELF IS BASED ON GOOD NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AND GDR AND CAN ONLY FUNCTION IF THEY ARE MAINTAINED. IN THE SAME VEIN, THE PEACE AND PROGRESS COMMENTARY NOTES THAT WITHOUT OSTPOLITIK, THERE COULD BE NO TALK OF FRICTIONLESS TRANSIT TO WEST BERLIN IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE PROBLEM LAY RATHER IN THE "RIGHTISTS" REFUSAL TO OBSERVE EXISTING AGREEMENTS.

5. FINALLY, THE PEACE AND PROGRESS COMMENTARY REFERS TO DISPLEASURE IN SOME CIRCLES THAT THE FRG GOVERNMENT, THE ALLIES AND THE EEC HAD NOT OFFERED ENOUGH SUPPORT TO THE "PROVOCATEURS." ACCORDING TO THE COMMENTARY, THIS SHOWS THAT THESE "PROVOCATEURS" GOT THEIR DUE AND THINGS COULD NOT HAVE TURNED OUT OTHERWISE.

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6. COMMENT: RELIANCE ON NON-OFFICIAL SOVIET COMMENTARIES AND THE RECENT BREZHNEV-HONECKER CRIMEA MEETING (REFTEL) ALLOWS THE GDR TO UNDERSCORE APPARENT FULL SOVIET SUPPORT FOR GDR SOVEREIGNTY AND FOR GDR ACTIONS IN THE STERNFAHRT AFFAIR. AT THE SAME TIME, THE RELATIVE ABSENCE OF INDEPENDENT GDR COMMENTARY RECENTLY MAY INDICATE THAT THE GDR SEEKS TO AVOID ANY FURTHER ESCALATION OF TENSIONS WITH THE FRG THAT

MIGHT BE HARMFUL TO THE SOCOURSE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS AND
POSSIBLY TO SPD CHANCES IN THE OCOTBER FRG ELECTIONS. COOPER

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